February 8, 2007

The Honorable Larry Gossett Chair, King County Council Room 1200 C O U R T H O U S E

The Honorable Julia Patterson Chair, King County Board of Health Room 1200 C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Chair Gossett and Board of Health Chair Patterson:

Enclosed for your review and approval is *A Policy Framework for the Health of the Public* (Framework), Phase I of the Public Health Operational Master Plan (PHOMP) and accompanying documents. The Framework is the completion of Phase I of the PHOMP and provides a broad set of policies to assist in guiding decision making regarding public health services in King County. The PHOMP is a collaborative planning process that engages the King County Executive Office, the Seattle-King County Department (DPH) of Public Health, the King County Council, the King County Board of Health and other stakeholders regarding public health in King County. I am pleased to be transmitting this set of policies to help us face the future challenges of public health.

## **Background**

The DPH provides a wide variety of regional services that protect and promote the health of all 1.8 million citizens of King County, as well as the hundreds of thousands of workers and tourists who enter the county each day. DPH continues to face a fiscal crisis that has resulted from limited and/or declining revenues, increasing costs of existing services, and increasing health mandates and needs of the public.

The overall objective of the PHOMP is to develop a sustainable operational and financing model for the provision of essential public health services in King County for the foreseeable future. The PHOMP is a collaborative multi-year planning effort conducted in two phases. Phase I establishes a set of broad policies to assist in prioritizing public health services in King County. Phase II will result in recommendations regarding operational implementation and funding.

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In 2005, in response to the council adopted work plan (Motion 12122), the Public Health Operational Master Plan Steering Committee was formed with representatives from the Executive Office, the County Council, the Board of Health and Public Health. The Steering Committee operates on a consensus based model for decision making that ensures a product that reflects the input of all the stakeholders involved in the process. The group continues to benefit from the active participation of additional stakeholders such as members from the Board of Health and is staffed by a project work group that consists of representatives from the King County Council, the King County Office of Management and Budget, and the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health. In late 2005, the Steering Committee selected Milne & Associates as an independent public health consulting group to support the OMP process.

## The Framework - A Broad Set of Policies and the Completion of Phase I

The Framework will serve as a road map for decision making for the future of public health services in King County. It was developed through a year long effort that included the development of the following four background papers by Milne & Associates: a Role and Definition paper, a Health Environment paper, a Policy Background paper, and a Funding Environment paper. These papers establish a comprehensive background regarding public health in King County, including a review of other metropolitan public health jurisdictions across the country; form a common understanding of public health; and finally, provide the basis for the policy framework. During the spring and summer of 2006, all four papers were accepted by the Steering Committee, and presented and reviewed by the Board of Health, and the County Council's Law, Justice, and Human Services (LJHS) Committee.

Following the active involvement of the Board of Health and the LJHS Committee in the development of the Framework, in September of 2006 a web based survey was administered to obtain feedback and input on the Framework. An invitation went out to approximately 750 external stakeholders and to all public health employees. In addition, the survey was made available to the general public through the King County Council home page, the Public Health –Seattle and King County home page, as well as the PHOMP project web page. We received a total of 581 responses. The results provided an overall message of support for the concepts included in the Framework. You can find the details of the survey responses on the PHOMP website at <a href="https://www.metrokc.gov/exec/publichealthmasterplan/">www.metrokc.gov/exec/publichealthmasterplan/</a>. I encourage you to review the feedback and comments that we received.

Stakeholder feedback and input from the Public Health Director designee, Dr. David Fleming, were incorporated into the Framework. The Framework being transmitted represents the ideas and input from all. The Framework provides King County with a set of agreed upon policies to assist in guiding decision making. The Framework will provide a common structure through which all policies and strategies can be analyzed and compared.

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The Framework provides King County with:

- Mission Statement for the Health of the Public
  - The overarching purpose of public health strategies and policies is to achieve optimum health for all in King County.
  - It is the goal of King County to protect and improve the health and well being of all in King County.
- Guiding Principles
  - o Based on science and evidence whenever possible.
  - o Focused on prevention of disease and promotion of good health.
  - o Centered on the community.
  - o Driven by social justice to proactively pursue the elimination of preventable differences in health among different population groups.
- Functions and Organizational Attributes
  - o Provide for the effective delivery of Public Health services.
- Criteria for Prioritizing Strategies to Guide Decision Making
  - The criterion recognizes that prioritization will also require value based judgment across public health functions that are not directly comparable.

The Framework provides us with our road map. As we embark on Phase II of the PHOMP, the Framework will provide the foundation for all recommendations on implementation strategies and funding options. The Framework will not make decisions for us; yet, the structure of the Framework will allow for strategies and options to be compared and evaluated based on a common set of agreed upon principles and policies. By adhering to the mission statement and guiding principles embodied in the Framework, together we can ensure that the regional goals for DPH can be carried out. The Framework will allow us a consistent way to understand and support this key regional service.

I would like to thank the elected officials, including Board of Health Chair Julia Patterson, and King County Councilmember Jane Hague, both members of the PHOMP Steering Committee, as well as Seattle City Councilmember Sally Clarke and Lake Forest Park Mayor Dave Hutchinson and the organizational and individual stakeholders that contributed their expertise, enthusiasm, patience, and time to the development of this *Policy Framework for the Health of the Public*.

As the PHOMP moves into the operational and financing strategies (Phase II) of the project, my staff and I look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the department, the County Council, and the Board of Health as we, together, complete the operational master plan.

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Thank you for your prompt consideration and approval of this Framework and the accompanying documents. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this request, please contact Bob Cowan, Director, Office of Management and Budget and Co-Chair of the PHOMP Steering Committee, at 206-296-3434.

Sincerely,

Ron Sims King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Ross Baker, Chief of Staff

Shelley Sutton, Policy Staff Director

Rebecha Cusack, Lead Staff, Capital Budget Committee William Nogle, Sr. Lead Staff, Operating Budget Committee

Carrie Cihak, Senior Principal Legislative Analyst

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

King County Board of Health Members

Bob Cowan, Director, Office of Management and Budget

Dr. David Fleming, Director-designee, Seattle-King County Department of Public Health (DPH)

Dorothy Teeter, Chief of Health Operations, DPH

Toni Rezab, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of Management and Budget

Kathy Uhlorn, Board of Health Administrator, DPH

Jonathan Larson, Budget Analyst, Office of Management and Budget